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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/829,490

Applicant(s)

CHEN ET AL.

Examiner

FONYA LONG

Art Unit

3689

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-893)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/16/2009

DETAILED ACTION

This communication is a first Non-Final Office Action on the merits. Claims 1-32, as originally filed, are currently pending and have been addressed below.

Claim Objections

1. Claim 11 is objected to because of the following informalities: The claim recites "a plurality of database". Examiner interprets the claim to be "a plurality of databasess". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claim 18 and 19 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claim 18 provides the claimed limitation of providing a quantitative estimation of customer impact by the revision of the technology process according to quantitative criteria. However, the claims and written description fail to provide detailed information on how the quantitative estimation is to be performed. There is no disclosure on how the system carries out the calculations to provide a quantitative estimation. The claims and

the written description fail to provide what calculations are performed and how the calculations are to be performed. The claims and the written description also fail to provide what the quantitative criteria is, and how it is to be applied to the calculations performed for the quantitative estimation.

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 18, 19, and 23-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As per Claims 18 and 19, it is unclear what the quantitative estimate of customer impact consists of. The written description fails to provide explanation on how the quantitative estimation is performed. What calculations are used? What factors are used to perform the calculations? What are the quantitative criteria? The claims fail to disclose how the calculations are performed to provide a quantitative estimation.

- As per Claim 23**, the claim recites the limitation "the type of technology" in Line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

As per Claim 24, the claim recites the limitation "a period of time" in Line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

As per Claim 25, the claim recites the limitation "the vendor" in Line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

As per Claim 26, the claim recites the limitation "the maker" in Line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

As per Claim 27, the claim recites the limitation "the design database" in Line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

6. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

7. Claims 1-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

As per Claims 1-19, the claim limitations recite "interfaces" and "modules" which are considered software. Software does not fall within at least one of the four statutory categories (process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter).

As per Claims 20-32, In order for a method to be considered a "process" under §101, a claimed process must either: (1) be tied to another statutory class (such as a particular apparatus) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials). *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972). If neither of these requirements is met by the claim, the method is not a patent eligible process under §101 and is non-statutory subject matter. With respect to claims 20-32, the claim language does not include the required tie or transformation and thus is directed to nonstatutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1-8, 12-15, and 20-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oppedahl et al. (6,789,092) in view of Yoshida et al. (6,212,518).

As per Claim 1, Oppedahl et al. discloses a system comprising:

an extraction module, responsive to the user interface, configured to search and extract information of a customer who has used a design technical documents database, wherein the design technical documents database includes information related to the technology process (Col. 3, Lines 11-25, via parsing software that extracts information from documents such as filing data, the examining group and the recent status); and

an estimate module configured to analyze the information of the customer and evaluate for the impact to the customer by the revision of the technology process (Col. 3, Lines 11-25, discloses the system analyzing information by comparing the received information with corresponding information in the first file and determines (i.e. evaluates) if there is any difference between the received information of interest, if so, notification is sent to predetermined recipients).

However, Oppedahl et al. fails to explicitly disclose a user interface.

Yoshida et al. discloses a system and method for retrieval of data from databases with the concept of a user interface configured to accept a predefined search scope and a predefined search scheme (Col. 6, Lines 24-28, discloses an user interface which accepts a search request from a searcher for information and displays a search result to the information searcher).

Therefore, from the teaching of Yoshida et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the status monitoring system of Oppedahl et al. to include an user interface as taught by Yoshida et al. in order to provide an efficient means to obtain relevant information stored in a system.

As per Claim 2, Oppedahl et al. discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 1, above. However, Oppedahl et al. fails to explicitly disclose a predefined search scope.

Yoshida et al. discloses a system and method for retrieval of data from databases with the concept of a predefined search scope (Col. 7, Line 26-Col. 8, Line 63, discloses having predefined search categories (i.e. search scope)).

Therefore, from the teaching of Yoshida et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the status monitoring system of Oppedahl et al. to include a predefined search scope as taught by Yoshida et al. in order to provide an efficient means to obtain relevant information stored in a system.

Examiner asserts that the predefined search scope including a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region is considered non-functional descriptive material. The search scope being a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region does not change the function of performing the search using a predefined search scope. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of performing a search using a predefined search scope including a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region.

As per Claim 3, Oppedahl et al. discloses a predefined search scheme (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses a client performing a search for records matching a predetermined criterion such as the customer number (i.e. predefined search scheme)).

Examiner asserts that the predefined search scheme including document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer is considered non-functional descriptive material. The search scheme being document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer does not change the function of performing the search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of performing a search using a predefined search scheme including document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer.

As per Claim 4, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 3, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the vendor comprising one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor.

Examiner asserts that the vendor comprising one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor is considered non-functional descriptive material. The vendor being one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor does not change the function of performing a search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of having a vendor be one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor.

As per Claim 5, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 3, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the maker comprising one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility.

Examiner asserts that the maker comprising one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility is considered non-functional descriptive material. The maker being one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility does not change the function of performing a search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of having a maker be one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility.

As per Claims 6-8, Oppedahl et al. discloses a database comprising documents (Col. 2, Lines 48-56, discloses a database comprising a multiplicity of records). However, Oppedahl et al. fails to explicitly discloses documents being at least a process document, and at least a technical file.

Examiner asserts that the documents being at least a process document, and at least a technical file is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of documents being stored in a database does not change the function of the claimed invention. Examiner asserts the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of a utilizing process documents and technical files.

As per Claim 12, Oppedahl et al. discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 1, above. However, Oppedahl et al. fails to explicitly disclose a user interface.

Yoshida et al. discloses a system and method for retrieval of data from databases with the concept of a user interface providing a search result to a user (Col. 6, Lines 24-28, discloses an user interface which accepts a search request from a searcher for information and displays a search result to the information searcher).

Therefore, from the teaching of Yoshida et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the status monitoring system of Oppedahl et al. to include an user interface as taught by Yoshida et al. in order to provide an efficient means to obtain relevant information stored in a system.

As per Claim 13, Oppedahl et al. discloses the extraction module searching relevant documents according to the predefined search scheme (Col. 3, Lines 11-25,

discloses the parsing software parsing (i.e. searching) records according to a predefined search scheme such as filing data, examining group, or examiner's name).

As per Claim 14, Oppedahl et al. discloses the extraction module performing a search (Col. 3, Lines 11-25, discloses the parsing software parsing (i.e. searching) records).

Examiner asserts the information in which the extraction module is searching for is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of information being searched for does not change the search function the claimed invention. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable is fully capable of performing a search for customers who have downloaded the relevant documents during the predefined search scope.

As per Claim 15, Oppedahl et al. discloses the extraction module extracting information (Col. 3, Lines 11-25, via parsing software that extracts information from documents).

Examiner asserts the information in which the extraction module is extracting is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of information being extracted does not change the extraction function of the claimed invention. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of extracting information of the customer through download history relevant documents.

As per Claim 20, Oppedahl et al. discloses providing a search scheme (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses a customer number (i.e. search scheme)) to search through a plurality of records); and

searching, according to the search scheme, a database (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses searching the PAIR server for records corresponding to the customer number).

However, Oppedahl fails to explicitly disclose a search scope.

Yoshida et al. discloses a method a system and method for retrieval of data from databases with the concept of providing a search scope (Col. 7, Line 26-Col. 8, Line 63, discloses having predefined search categories (i.e. search scope)).

Therefore, from the teaching of Yoshida et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the status monitoring system of Oppedahl et al. to include a search scope as taught by Yoshida et al. in order to provide an efficient means to obtain relevant information stored in a system.

Examiner asserts the type of information being searched is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of information does not change the search function of the claimed invention. Examiner asserts the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of search through design technical documents that includes information related to a technology process to determine a customer impacted by the revision.

As per Claim 21, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the search scope including one of a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region of a customer.

Examiner asserts that the predefined search scope including a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region is considered non-functional descriptive material. The search scope being a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region does not change the function of performing the search using a predefined search scope. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of performing a search using a predefined search scope including a period of time, a type of technology, and a physical region.

As per Claim 22, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 21, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the search scheme including one of a document title, a document number, a vendor, a maker, and an end customer.

Examiner asserts that the predefined search scheme including document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer is considered non-functional descriptive material. The search scheme being document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer does not change the function of performing the search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of performing a search using a predefined search scheme including document title, document number, vendor, maker, and end customer.

As per Claim 23, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the type of technology.

Examiner asserts that the type of technology including 0.25 μm and above, 0.25 μm to 0.15 μm , 0.15 μm to 0.09 μm , and below 0.09 μm is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of technology does not change the function of performing a search. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of performing a search with information related to the technology process, wherein the technology includes 0.25 μm and above, 0.25 μm to 0.15 μm , 0.15 μm to 0.09 μm , and below 0.09 μm .

As per Claim 24, Oppedahl et al. discloses performing a search for a period of time (Col. 2, Line 65-Col. 3, Line 3, discloses a search for updates being performed daily, weekly, or monthly).

Examiner asserts it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the search be performed quarterly (i.e. 3 months), bi-yearly (i.e. 6 months), or yearly (i.e. 12 months).

As per Claim 25, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the type of vendor.

Examiner asserts that the vendor comprising one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor is considered non-functional descriptive material. The vendor being one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor does not change the function of performing a search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et

al. combination is fully capable of having a vendor be one of electronic design automation (EDA) vendor, a chip service company, a library, and an intellectual property (IP) vendor.

As per Claim 26, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose a type of maker.

Examiner asserts that the maker comprising one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility is considered non-functional descriptive material. The maker being one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility does not change the function of performing a search using a predefined search scheme. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination is fully capable of having a maker be one of a photomask maker, a wafer manufacturer, a testing facility, and a packaging facility.

As per Claim 27, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the design database comprising one of design rule check database, layout versus schematic database, and RC extraction database.

Examiner asserts that the type of database and the type of data being stored on the database is considered non-functional descriptive material. The type of database and the type of data being stored on the database does not change the claimed function of performing a search. Examiner asserts that the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al.

combination is fully capable of utilizing a design database comprising one of design rule check database, layout versus schematic database, and RC extraction database.

10. Claims 9-11 and 28-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oppedahl et al. (6,789,092) in view of Yoshida et al. (6,212,518) and in further view of Kuo (US 2005/0021165).

As per Claim 9, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 1, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the system comprising a virtual fab.

Kuo discloses an inter-fab mask process management system with the concept of a virtual fab that is a network entity (Abstract; Fig. 1, 2, and 3; [00919], discloses a virtual fab which is a plurality of entities, each entity associated with an internal process to a semiconductor fab or an external process via a network).

Therefore, from the teaching of Kuo, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include a virtual fab as taught by Kuo in order to aid in managing documentation for a semiconductor manufacturing environment.

As per Claim 10, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 9, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the virtual fab being connected to at least one of a customer, a vendor, a manufacturer, and a design group.

Kuo discloses an inter-fab mask process management system with the concept of a virtual fab being connected to at least one of a customer, a vendor, a manufacturer,

and a design group (Abstract; Fig. 1, 2, and 3; [0022], discloses the virtual fab being connected to a customer).

Therefore, from the teaching of Kuo, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include a virtual fab as taught by Kuo in order to aid in managing documentation for a semiconductor manufacturing environment.

As per Claim 11, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 9, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose the virtual fab comprising a plurality of databases.

Kuo discloses an inter-fab mask process management system with the concept of a virtual fab comprising a plurality of databases ([0019-0021] discloses the virtual fab having a plurality of entities wherein each entity comprises a memory unit which may include remote storage locations).

Therefore, from the teaching of Kuo, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include the virtual fab comprising a plurality of databases as taught by Kuo in order to aid in managing documentation for a semiconductor manufacturing environment.

Examiner asserts that the database comprising design technical documents is considered non-functional descriptive materials. The type of data being stored in a database does not change the function of the claimed invention. Examiner asserts that

the Oppedahl et al., Yoshida et al., and Kuo combination is fully capable of having a database contain design technical documents.

As per Claims 28 and 29, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to disclose a virtual fab that is a network entity.

Kuo discloses an inter-fab mask process management system with the concept of a virtual fab that is a network entity (Abstract; Fig. 1, 2, and 3; [00919], discloses a virtual fab which is a plurality of entities, each entity associated with an internal process to a semiconductor fab or an external process via a network).

Therefore, from the teaching of Kuo, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include a virtual fab as taught by Kuo in order to aid in managing documentation for a semiconductor manufacturing environment.

As per Claim 30, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 29, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose a virtual fab being connected to at least a customer, a vendor, a manufacturer, and a design lab.

Kuo discloses an inter-fab mask process management system with the concept of a virtual fab being connected to at least one of a customer, a vendor, a manufacturer, and a design group (Abstract; Fig. 1, 2, and 3; [0022], discloses the virtual fab being connected to a customer).

Therefore, from the teaching of Kuo, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include a virtual fab as taught by Kuo in order to aid in managing documentation for a semiconductor manufacturing environment.

11. Claims 16-19, 31, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oppedahl et al. (6,789,092) in view of Yoshida et al. (6,212,518) and in further view of Mir (6,938,081).

As per Claim 16, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 1, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose providing a list of customers.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of providing a list of customers who are impacted by the revision of the technology process (Col. 12, Lines 23-30, via notification section provides a listing a impacted customers that should be notified of the change).

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include providing a list of customers as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

As per Claim 17, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 16, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose providing a list of customers.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of providing a list of customer who are impacted by the revision of the technology process according to a quantitative criteria (Col. 12, Lines 23-30, via notification section provides a listing of impacted customers that should be notified of the change).

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include providing a list of customers as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

As per Claim 18, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 1, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose a quantitative estimation of customer impact by the revision.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of estimating a customer impact by a revision (Col. 5, Lines 1-28, discloses determining how the customer is going to be impacted due to the change in process).

However, Mir fails to explicitly discloses the estimation being quantitative.

Examiner asserts it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a quantitative estimation of the impact of a customer such as impact of cost to the customer or impact on time to deliver a product or service to a customer based on the process change.

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include a quantitative estimate of customer impact by the revision as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

As per Claim 19, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 18, above. However, the combination fails to explicitly disclose providing a suggestion for a communication with relevant customers, vendors, and makers for the revision.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of providing a suggestion for a communication with relevant customers, vendors, and makers for the revision of the technology process (Abstract, discloses providing rules (i.e. suggestions) about how the affected entities should be notified of the change).

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include providing a suggestion for a communication with relevant customers, vendors, and makers for the revision as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

As per Claim 31, the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination discloses the claimed invention as applied to Claim 20, above. However, the combination fails to

explicitly discloses specifying a change of process and verifying validity of the change of process.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of specifying a change of process wherein the change of process is associated with a technical document (Col. 7, Lines 1-20, discloses specifying a change of process via opening a change ticket and writing the accompanying change plan which is includes information on the impact of the change, or who is involved in the change); and verifying validity of the change of process according to a set of predefined rules (Col. 4, Lines 22-67, discloses approving or disapproving (i.e. verifying validity) of the change plan that comprises a set of instructions on how to carry out the change).

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include specifying a change of process and verifying validity of the change of process as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

As per Claim 32, Oppedahl et al. discloses providing a search scheme (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses a customer number (i.e. search scheme)) to search through a plurality of records); and

searching, according to the search scheme, a database (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses searching the PAIR server for records corresponding to the customer number); and

providing a result of the search (Col. 4, Lines 19-31, discloses providing search results via providing the client with all record identifiers matching the predetermined criterion).

However, Oppedahl fails to explicitly disclose a search scope; specifying a change of process; and verifying validity of the change of process.

Yoshida et al. discloses a system and method for retrieval of data from databases with the concept of providing a search scope (Col. 7, Line 26-Col. 8, Line 63, discloses having predefined search categories (i.e. search scope)).

Therefore, from the teaching of Yoshida et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the status monitoring system of Oppedahl et al. to include a search scope as taught by Yoshida et al. in order to provide an efficient means to obtain relevant information stored in a system.

Mir discloses a system and method for managing changes to a process with the concept of specifying a change of process wherein the change of process is associated with a technical document (Col. 7, Lines 1-20, discloses specifying a change of process via opening a change ticket and writing the accompanying change plan which is includes information on the impact of the change, or who is involved in the change); and verifying validity of the change of process according to a set of predefined rules (Col. 4, Lines 22-67, discloses approving or disapproving (i.e. verifying validity) of the change plan that comprises a set of instructions on how to carry out the change).

Therefore, from the teaching of Mir, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Oppedahl et al. and Yoshida et al. combination to include specifying a change of process and verifying validity of the change of process as taught by Mir in order to aid in gracefully carrying out a change by providing awareness to those impacted by the change.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Tsuda et al. (6,629,090) discloses a method and device for analyzing data.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to FONYA LONG whose telephone number is (571)270-5096. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thur 7:30am-6:00pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Janice Mooneyham can be reached on (571) 272-6805. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/F. L./
Examiner, Art Unit 3689

/Tan Dean D. Nguyen/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3689
January 19, 2009